

Application No: 13/2553N

Location: 285, NANTWICH ROAD, CREWE, CHESHIRE, CW2 6PF

Proposal: Change of use from a large six bedroomed residential home to a residential house of multiple occupancy housing 8 tenants.

Applicant: Miss Stephanie James, James Holdridge Properties

Expiry Date: 12-Sep-2013

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION – Approve with conditions

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of use
- Impact

REASON FOR REFERRAL

The application was called in by Councillor Sherratt, as the Chairman of the Crewe Town Council has commented, on the following grounds:

“The objection is that there is no fire escape or fire doors. No provision for waste disposal and it claims there are 8 parking spaces but none are marked. This is an area where the alley ways are gated”.

Subsequently, the application was put before the 17th September 2013 meeting of Southern Area Planning Committee. It was deferred at that meeting for further information on parking layout, bin storage and internal layout. Further details and plans have now been submitted by the applicant.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site comprises a large vacant residential house. The house is of a traditional Victorian style and is located on the northern side of Nantwich Road, Crewe.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks full planning permission for change of use from a house to a residential house with 8 bedsit flats (C4). There would be 2 bedsits, a kitchen and a communal dining room on the ground floor; and 4 bedrooms on the first floor and 2 bedrooms on the second floor. Three bathroom/WCs are proposed and space to accommodate eight parked vehicles.

RELEVANT HISTORY

P08/0928 – Single storey extension to enlarge kitchen/dining – Approved 22nd September 2008.

POLICIES

National policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Local Plan Policy

BE.1 – Amenity

BE.3 - Access and Parking

RES.9 – Houses in Multiple Occupation

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Private Sector Housing

Facilities should accord with the Housing Act 2004 and the HMO regulations 2006 as a mandatory license will be required.

Strategic Highways Manager

The plan does not show adequate space for vehicle turning and general manoeuvres within the site. The individual car spaces are not shown. They should have dimensions of 2.5m x 4.8m and concerned these spaces not being able to be successfully tracked. The site is simply too tight to work in practice. The Strategic Highways Manager cannot support the proposal on this basis as displaced parking onto the public highway would have potential detriment to public highway safety and would recommend refusal of this application if this level of detail is maintained.

Environmental Health

Recommend conditions relating to hours of construction, noise, lighting, bin storage and advisory notes in respect of building regulations and contamination.

VIEWS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

The Town Council have expressed concerns about lack of safety provision, no specific refuse provision and the only access to car parking via the gated alleyway.

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

None received at the time of report writing.

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principal of Development

The application site is located within the Crewe settlement boundary where there is a general presumption in favour of development. Nantwich Road is a predominantly shopping/commercial area to the east but is typified by large 3 storey terraced residences to the south at this point.

Policy RES.9 allows for the conversion of buildings to houses of multiple occupation provided that the building is large enough to provide satisfactory living conditions, without the need for extensions that would conflict with Policies BE.1 and BE.2, the external appearance would be acceptable, there is no adverse impact on residential amenity and parking can be safely accommodated.

It is considered that the proposal would comply with the requirements of Policy RES.9 and the NPPF and therefore the proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle.

Design

There are no alterations proposed to the external elevations as the building is being purely refurbished and converted internally. The room sizes meet minimum accepted standards.

Amenity

Having regard to future residents of the properties, they would need to have acceptable living conditions and the majority of the issues that have been raised in consultation are covered by other legislation. Bin storage has also been raised as an issue. The applicants have not submitted details of bin storage, but have provided a statement that a further wheelie bin for household waste and another for recycling would be provided and there is an accessible yard to the rear of the property, in which this could be accommodated.

Parking and Highway Safety

The Strategic Highways Manager has commented with objections to the layout of the submitted car parking layout. It is clear that the layout is utilising all available space and may not meet standards required from an engineering perspective. Nevertheless, this drawing and site inspection does confirm that there is ample space to accommodate a number of vehicles in an informal manner with a usable private vehicular access to the rear. The front access has benefit of a dropped kerb and it is also possible to access the site from Nantwich Road. It is extremely unlikely that all residents would be car owners and this is considered to be a sustainable location, with easy access to shops, services, buses and trains. Also, given that the applicants are able to provide 6 bedsits on site without planning permission it is not considered a refusal is justified on grounds of highway safety. As such the proposal is considered to be in compliance with Policy BE.3 (Highways).

Other matters

The issue of fire exits, bathing and toilet facilities and kitchen facilities have also been raised by the Town Council in relation to this application. It should be noted that these issues are dealt with under Building Regulations and Housing legislation and not Planning and the applicants have confirmed that they intend seek and comply with the appropriate licenses. It is therefore not proposed to condition issues relating to construction, building regulations, lighting or contamination. It has been confirmed that three bathroom/WC facilities are proposed where only two are required by HMO standards.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The proposed change of use is located within the Crewe settlement boundary and would involve no external alteration of the building. It would not have an adverse impact upon neighbouring amenity or raise significant enough highway/parking issues and also brings back into use a vacant property. The proposal therefore complies with Policies BE.1 (Amenity), BE.2 (Design Standards) and BE.3 (Access and Parking) of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011. The development also complies with the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to the following conditions:

1. Time limit
2. Approved plans
3. Submission of details of bin storage
4. Scheme of parking

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